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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2006

In Today's Papers

Turkey: Denmark Has Enough Evidence to Ban Roj-TV
All papers: Justice Minister Cemil Cicek said Wednesday Turkey had sent to Denmark a considerable amount of evidence indicating links between Roj-TV and the PKK, which should be enough to ban the Copenhagen-based Kurdish broadcaster. Documents submitted by Turkey show that Roj-TV rebroadcast at least 18 programs produced by another Kurdish broadcaster, Med-TV, which was banned in Britain for having ties with the PKK.

President Abbas to Visit Turkey
Zaman reports the Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas will come to Turkey on April 24 for two-day working visit to discuss the situation in Palestine since Hamas took power and Turkey's financial support for the Palestinian people. Diplomatic sources said Turkey would continue to support Palestine financially through various development projects.

US Seeks Azerbaijani Bases against Iran
Cumhuriyet claims the United States, in an effort to topple the Tehran Administration from inside, has increased the funds meant for the opposition Azeri Iranians to USD 70 million from USD 15 million. Washington is trying to persuade the Azeris in Iran to cooperate against Tehran in a possible military operation by the US. Washington is also expected to ask for bases in Azerbaijan from President Ilham Aliyev, who is to visit the US on April 25. Meanwhile, President Ahmadinejad will participate in the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) summit meetings to be held in Baku on May 3-4, Sabah reports. It's not clear whether Prime Minister Erdogan, who will also participate in the ECO meetings, will meet with Ahmadinejad in Baku.

Secretary Rice to Visit Ankara Next Week

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All papers: Secretary Rice is going to visit Ankara on April 26 and meet with FM Gul, PM Erdogan as well as President Sezer. Foreign Minister Gul will have the chance to meet one-on-one with Secretary Rice, a chance missed when he had to cancel his planned trip to Washington last month due to health reasons. Rice will be in Sofia for the NATO-EU summit following Ankara and Athens. On the other hand, FM Gul's participation in the in Sofia meeting has yet to be confirmed. The nuclear standoff with Iran and Iraq as well as the PKK will be the major topics during Secretary Rice's visit in Turkey. Turkish officials will bring up once again the expectation that the US take immediate action against the PKK in northern Iraq. Secretary Rice has already put the "PKK file" in her briefcase and she is prepared to talk about it. Other issues expected to be discussed include Turkey-EU relations and Cyprus.

Hurriyet reports that, Ankara is preparing to host Iranian negotiator on nuclear program, Mr. Larijani. He is expected to be in Ankara on April 24 right before Secretary Rice, who is expected on April 26. With these two upcoming visits, Ankara will be playing a 'de facto mediating' role between the US and Iran by passing the messages from Larijani.

Columnist Murat Yetkin in Radikal thinks that Turkey is preparing to face the Iran issue vis--vis the US. He believes that the US is seeking more international support in the crisis with Iran and Turkey is one of them. On the other hand, while Turkey does not support Iran's move to acquire nuclear weapons, at the same time Ankara does not want to be involved in a possible war with Iran in any form. Columnist Yetkin assumes that Ambassador Ross Wilson might have taken an early step to set the tone during the Rice

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visit by seeing some AKP officials in the ruling party headquarters recently.

TV Highlights
NTV, 8.00 a.m.

Domestic News

- Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul met the ambassadors of EU countries in Ankara to seek support for Turkish efforts to get a seat in the UN Security Council.
- Justice Minister Cemil Cicek said the new anti-terror draft submitted to the parliament for approval did not aim to restrict freedoms.

International News

- A report by an Iraqi NGO said 20,000 people have been kidnapped in Iraq since the beginning of the year.
- A Serbian daily said war criminal fugitive General Ratko Mladic had been found and would be arrested soon.
- Germany is to open Nazi records on 17 million Jews and other victims of the regime to historians and victims' relatives.

Economy News

- Turkish parliament approved a new social security bill which would improve working and retirement conditions of public and private sector employees in a country of 70 million. Labor unions and the main opposition CHP opposed the law which, they claim, was enacted under IMF directives, and which extends retirement age to 65.
- An IMF report predicts 6 percent growth and 6.5 percent year-end inflation for the Turkish economy in 2006.

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